



STRIKE UP THE BAN



Facebook board upholds Trump ban, just not indefinitely

President Donald Trump speaks to crowd before boarding Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., in this Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021, file photo.

Associated Press
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Facebook board upholds Trump ban, just not indefinitely

From Front

By **MATT O'BRIEN** and **BARBARA ORTUTAY**

AP Technology Writer

Former President Donald Trump won't return to Facebook — at least not yet. Four months after Facebook suspended Trump's accounts, having concluded that he incited violence leading to the deadly Jan. 6 Capitol riot, the company's quasi-independent oversight board upheld the bans. But it told Facebook to specify how long they would last, saying that its "indefinite" ban on the former president was unreasonable. The ruling, which gives Facebook six months to comply, effectively postpones any possible Trump reinstatement



In this March 29, 2018, file photo, the logo for Facebook appears on screens at the Nasdaq MarketSite in New York's Times Square. Associated Press

and puts the onus for that decision squarely back on the company. That could leave Facebook in the worst of all possible worlds — one in which Trump's supporters remain enraged

over the bans, his critics pushing for broader social-media regulation and the company stuck with a momentous issue it clearly hoped the oversight board would resolve. The decision

only "kicks the can down the road," said Jonathan Greenblatt, the head of the Anti-Defamation League, who said it highlighted the need for greater government oversight of social platforms. The board ruled that Facebook was correct to suspend Trump's account four months ago. But it said the company erred by applying a vague penalty and then passing the question of whether to ban Trump permanently to the board. "Indefinite penalties of this sort do not pass the international smell test," oversight board co-chair Michael McConnell said in a conference call with reporters. "We are not cops, reigning over the realm of social media."

In a statement, Trump did not address the decision directly, but said that actions by Facebook, Twitter, and Google are "a total disgrace and an embarrassment to our Country." He added: "These corrupt social media companies must pay a political price." The board agreed with Facebook that that two of Trump's Jan. 6 posts "severely violated" the content standards of both Facebook and Instagram. "We love you. You're very special," Trump said to the rioters in the first post. In the second, he called them "great patriots" and told them to "remember this day forever." Those violated Facebook's rules against praising or supporting people engaged in violence, the board said, warranting the suspension. Specifically, the board cited Facebook's rules against "dangerous individuals and organizations," which prohibit anyone who proclaims a violent mission and bans posts that ex-

press support or praise of these people or groups.

But it insisted that the company needed to take responsibility for its decision.

"Facebook should either permanently disable Trump's account or impose a suspension for a specific period of time," said board co-chair Helle Thorning-Schmidt, a former Danish prime minister.

The board said that if Facebook decides to restore Trump's accounts, it must be able to promptly address further violations. Among other recommendations, it advised against drawing a firm distinction between political leaders and other influential users because anyone with a big audience can potentially cause serious risks of harm. There was some dissent within the board, according to its report on the decision. A minority of board members sought to characterize Trump's statements about the election being stolen, coupled with praise for the rioters, as a violation of Facebook's rules against inciting violence through calls for action or by spreading misinformation and unverifiable rumors. But the board said that adding that as a violation wouldn't have affected its final ruling.

Facebook has long straddled that issue, granting political figures greater leeway than it allows ordinary users because, it argued, even their rule-breaking statements were important for citizens to hear.

"The same rules should apply to all users on Facebook, no matter how influential they are," said board spokesman Dex Hunter-Torricke, a former speechwriter for Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg. □



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U.S. parents excited over prospect of virus shots for children

By **HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH** and **TODD RICHMOND**

Associated Press

MISSION, Kan. (AP) — After more than a year of fretting over her 13-year son with a rare liver disease, Heather Ousley broke into tears when she learned that he and millions of other youngsters could soon be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. "This day is the best day in the history of days!!! I love this day!!!" she texted, joining other parents and educators in welcoming the news that the Food and Drug Administration is expected to authorize Pfizer's vaccine by next week for children ages 12 to 15.

Ousley, president of the school board for the 27,000-student Shawnee Mission School District in Kansas, plans to get her 13- and 15-year-olds promptly vaccinated and then celebrate with ice cream. They have been learning from home with their younger brother since the start of the outbreak.

Pfizer is also anticipating the FDA will endorse use of its vaccine in even younger children sometime this fall. And results are expected by the middle of this year from a U.S. study of Moderna's shots in 12- to 17-year-olds.

Officials are hoping that extending vaccinations to children will drive down the nation's caseload even further and allow schools to reopen with minimal disruption this fall.

It could also reassure parents and teachers alike. While children rarely get seriously ill from the coronavirus, then can still get sick and spread it to others.

Pfizer in March released preliminary results from a study of 2,260 U.S. volunteers ages 12 to 15, showing there were no cases of COVID-19 among fully vaccinated children compared with 18 among those given dummy shots.

That is welcome news for Robin and Aaron Perry of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, who have five boys, ages 5 to 17. Their oldest, Cooper, has been battling leukemia and contracted COVID-19



Heather Ousley sits with her older children Elliannah, 15, right, and Samuel, 13, in front of their home in Merriam, Kan, Tuesday, May 4, 2021.

Associated Press

in November, in what his mother described as a "terrifying" time for the family. The disease spread to the rest of the family.

They all pulled through, and Cooper and his parents have all since been vaccinated. But his mother can't wait for her 15-year-old, Reece, and 12-year-old, Tucker, to get their shots so their brother is as protected as possible.

"It feels like more security around Cooper with a compromised immune system," Robin Perry said. "It's just being part of the solution. That's what excites me the most. It's an added level of protection. Maybe you can take a deeper breath."

Educators have already embraced vaccines for students 16 and up, with some scheduling vaccine clinics during school hours and dangling prize drawings and other incentives. In New York's Erie County, prom-themed vaccination clinics were held this past weekend, including one with a tropical feel where health care workers wore grass skirts and 16- and 17-year-olds went home with gift bags of masks and hand sanitizer. Similar efforts are expected to draw in 12- to 15-year-olds.

Dan Domenech, executive director of AASA, the School Superintendents Association, said vaccinating younger students should help parents feel more comfortable about sending their children back to classrooms and ease concerns among some teachers.

"Say you have a class where every student is vaccinated and so is the teacher. That becomes a very different environment," Domenech said. He added: "Schools were very pleased when the CDC came out with the 3-foot spacing as opposed to the 6-foot spacing, because that immediately allowed them to have more students in school at one time. This will have a similar effect."

Seventy-four-year-old Pat Shepard, a retired Spanish teacher from Lincoln, Nebraska, who has worked as a substitute during the outbreak, is eager to see eligibility expand, saying students are increasingly resisting wearing masks.

"You are starting to see more and more of them wearing them down below their nose because they are just tired of it," she said. "And then, too, they want to get out and do more

things." Keri Rodrigues, a co-founder of the education advocacy group the National Parents Union, said she rushed out to get vaccinated after becoming eligible but has more trepidation about immunizing her oldest son, who is 13. She plans to go ahead with it, though, in part because he is demanding it. "He has cabin fever and he wants to get out," explained Rodrigues, who lives near Boston.

The group's newly released survey from April of 1,151 parents around the country found that others are also conflicted. Forty percent planned to get their children vaccinated immediately, 22% eventually and 23% never, and the remaining 15% were unsure.

"Obviously parents are torn right now because you are watching your kids really go through an emotional struggle, especially our teens," she said. "I think we are all taking a leap of faith, but I think what we have to do is trust science in this moment." President Joe Biden said Tuesday that if the FDA authorizes the use of Pfizer's vaccine in children as young as 12, the administration is prepared to ship doses to 20,000 pharmacies around

the country and directly to pediatricians.

Coy Marquardt, associate executive director of Iowa's teachers union, said his 14-year-old son is excited to get vaccinated and has been asking for months when he would be eligible. Marquardt said that because of vaccine hesitancy, it doesn't look as if herd immunity is going to be achieved anytime soon.

"That makes it even more important to expand the use to 12- to 15-year-olds, including my son, just to protect him," he said.

Tom Rosenberg, president and CEO of the American Camp Association, which accredits 3,200 camps and works with about 12,000 others, said he has been deluged with messages since the news broke.

Last year, 40% of day camps and 82% of overnight camps didn't operate, but many were gearing up to reopen this summer, with masks and socially distancing, he said. He said the vaccine would offer another layer of protection and might persuade some hesitant parents to sign up their children.

"It could be a game changer," said Rosenberg, who plans to get his own 13-year-old vaccinated. □

Families, advocates mark day of awareness for Native victims

By FELICIA FONSECA and SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN
Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) —

From Washington to Indigenous communities across the American Southwest, top government officials, family members and advocates gathered Wednesday as part of a call to action to address the ongoing problem of violence against Indigenous women and children.

U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and other federal officials commemorated the annual day of awareness as a caravan of female motorcycle riders planned to hit the streets in Phoenix, advocates took to social media, and families prepared for a night of candlelight and prayer vigils. In Washington, an event hosted by federal officials started with a prayer asking for guidance and grace for the Indigenous families who have lost relatives and those who have been victims of violence. Before and after a moment of silence, officials from various agencies vowed to continue working with tribes to address the crisis.

As part of the ceremony, a red memorial shawl with the names of missing and slain Indigenous women was draped across a long table to remember the lives behind what Haaland called alarming and unacceptable statistics. More names were added to the shawl Wednesday.

Haaland, the first Native American to lead a U.S. cabinet agency and a for-



In this Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2020, file photo, Jeannie Hovland, the deputy assistant secretary for Native American Affairs for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, poses with a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women mask, in Anchorage, Alaska, while attending the opening of a Lady Justice Task Force cold case office in Anchorage, which will investigate missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Associated Press

mer Democratic U.S. representative from New Mexico, recalled hearing families testify about searching for loved ones on their own and bringing a red ribbon skirt to a congressional hearing that represented missing and slain Native Americans.

Haaland displayed the red shawl in her office Wednesday to symbolize those who have disappeared and honor the movement that rang the alarm. She believes the nation has reached an inflection point, saying it's time to solve the crisis.

"Everyone deserves to feel safe in their communities, but the missing and mur-

dered Indigenous peoples crisis is one that Native communities have faced since the dawn of colonization," she said as she joined the ceremony virtually. "For too long, this issue has been swept under the rug with the lack of urgency, attention and funding."

U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland also issued a statement, saying the Justice Department is "committed to finding lasting solutions to the public safety challenges tribal communities encounter and to protecting them from violence, abuse and exploitation."

Indigenous women have been victimized at aston-

ishing rates, with federal figures showing that they — along with non-Hispanic Black women — have experienced the highest homicide rates.

Yet an Associated Press investigation in 2018 found that nobody knows the precise number of cases of missing and murdered Native Americans nationwide because many go unreported, others aren't well documented, and no government database specifically tracks them.

In New Mexico, members of the state's task force on Wednesday shared some of the findings of their work over the past year, which included combing through

public records and requesting data from nearly two dozen law enforcement agencies to better understand the scope of the problem. Only five agencies responded.

Even with such limited data, they pointed to an estimated 660 cases involving missing Indigenous people between 2014 and 2019 in the state's largest urban center, putting Albuquerque among U.S. cities with the highest number of cases.

New Mexico's task force will be expanded and its work extended into 2022, with the goal of recommending policy changes and legislation.

Other states also have established task forces or commissions to focus on the problem, with Hawaii becoming the latest through legislation that points to land dispossession, incarceration and harmful stereotypes as reasons for Native Hawaiians' increased vulnerability to violence.

President Joe Biden issued a proclamation Tuesday on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day. He has promised to bolster resources to address the crisis and better consult with tribes to hold perpetrators accountable and keep communities safe.

Haaland said that includes more staffing in a U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs unit dedicated to solving cold cases and coordinating with Mexico and Canada to combat human trafficking. □



Hattiesburg police surround a burned automobile and a damaged home after a small plane crashed late Tuesday night in Hattiesburg, Miss., Wednesday May 5, 2021.

Associated Press

Four people killed when plane crashes into Mississippi home

HATTIESBURG, Miss. (AP) —

A small plane crashed into a house in Mississippi late Tuesday, killing a man inside as well as a toddler and two adults from Texas who were on board, authorities said.

Two National Transportation Safety Board investigators were on the way to Hattiesburg, about 90 miles (145 kilometers) southeast

of Jackson, to investigate the crash of the Mitsubishi MU-2B-60, the agency said Wednesday.

Police and the coroner's office identified the dead as Gerry Standley, 55, of Hattiesburg; and three people from Wichita Falls, Texas: Louis Provenza, 67; Harper Provenza, 2; and Anna Calhoun, 23, news agencies reported.

Hattiesburg police were called to the scene of the crash just before 11:30 p.m. Tuesday, police spokesman Ryan Moore said.

Police initially said two people died; later Wednesday morning, they raised the toll to four.

The plane can hold a crew of two, plus six passengers. □

Israeli opposition leader tapped to form new government

By JOSEF FEDERMAN

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's president on Wednesday tapped opposition leader Yair Lapid to form a new government — a step that could lead to the end of the lengthy rule of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

President Reuven Rivlin announced his decision on live television a day after Netanyahu failed to cobble together a governing coalition by a midnight deadline.

Rivlin spent the day consulting with all of the parties elected to Israel's parliament and announced late Wednesday that he believes Lapid has the best chance of forming a coalition. Rivlin said that based on the recommendations, "it is clear that Knesset member Yair Lapid has a chance to form a government that will earn the confidence of the Knesset, even if the difficulties are many." Lapid, whose late father was a Cabinet minister and who himself is a veteran journalist and politician, now has four weeks to reach a deal with potential partners. In a statement, Lapid said he would move quickly to form a broadbased unity government "as soon as possible, so we can get to work for the people of Israel."



In this March 14, 2021 file photo, people stand in front of an election campaign billboard for the Likud party showing a portrait of its leader Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, and opposition party leader Yair Lapid, in Ramat Gan, Israel.

"We need a government that will reflect the fact that we don't hate one another," he said. "A government in which left, right and center will work together to tackle the economic and security challenges we face. A government that will show that our differences are a source of strength, not weakness."

While Lapid faces a difficult task, he now has the chance to make history by ending the reign of Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving prime minister. Netanyahu has held the post for a

total of 15 years, including the past 12.

"It looks like, perhaps within a few days or a few weeks, we might have a functioning coalition that will not include Mr. Netanyahu. This will be a groundbreaking change," said Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute, an independent think tank. He acknowledged, however, that "a fifth consecutive election is still, unfortunately, a real possibility."

Lapid, 57, entered parliament in 2013 after a successful career as a news-

paper columnist, TV anchor and author. His new Yesh Atid party ran a successful rookie campaign, landing Lapid the powerful post of finance minister.

But he and Netanyahu did not get along, and the coalition quickly crumbled. Yesh Atid has been in the opposition since 2015 elections. The party is popular with secular, middle-class voters and has been critical of Netanyahu's close ties with ultra-Orthodox parties and said the prime minister should step down while on trial for corruption charges.

Elections held March 23 ended in deadlock for the fourth consecutive time in the past two years. Despite repeated meetings with many of his rivals and unprecedented outreach to the leader of a small Islamist Arab party, Netanyahu was unable to close a deal. Rivlin, whose post is mostly ceremonial, is responsible for designating a party leader to form a government after each election. He gave Netanyahu the first chance after 52 members of parliament endorsed him as prime minister last month. That was short of a 61-seat majority, but the highest number for any party leader.

During Wednesday's consultations, the 52-member pro-Netanyahu bloc asked Rivlin not to choose another candidate and instead ask parliament to decide upon a prime minister. In a statement, Netanyahu's Likud party said such a move "will save another period of uncertainty for the state of Israel." Lapid, who received the backing of some 56 lawmakers on Wednesday, already has offered a power-sharing deal to Naftali Bennett, leader of the right-wing Yamina party. Under the proposal, the two men would share the prime minister's job in a rotation, with Bennett holding the post first. □

Associated Press

Row settled: UK grants EU ambassador full diplomatic status

By PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The U.K. has granted full diplomatic status to the European Union's ambassador to the country, in a reversal of policy that settles one of the disputes that have strained relations between the two sides since Brexit. In a joint statement Wednesday, British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and the EU's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, said they had reached an agreement that was "based on goodwill and pragmatism."

Under the so-called Establishment Agreement for

the EU Delegation to the U.K., the EU's ambassador to London will now have a status consistent with those from states around the world.

The EU's staff will also have the same privileges and immunities that other delegations have in the U.K. The changes bring an end to one of the rows that have soured relations since the U.K. left the EU in early 2020. The U.K. had sought to justify its decision not to grant full diplomatic status to João Vale de Almeida, the bloc's first ambassador to London, on the grounds the EU is not a state even

though other countries give it equivalent credentials.

Many thought the U.K.'s stance was petty and aimed purely at helping Prime Minister Boris Johnson to draw as many concessions as possible from the EU during their post-Brexit discussions last year. Though a trade deal was eventually sealed on Christmas Eve, there are many lingering tensions between the U.K. and the EU, not least over Northern Ireland, which is the only land border between the two. □



High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell, right, and Dominic Raab Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs meet ahead of bi-lateral talks during the G7 foreign ministers' meeting in London, Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

Associated Press

Macron commemorates 200th anniversary of Napoleon's death

By ELAINE GANLEY

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — President Emmanuel Macron, in an unusual gesture on Wednesday, marked the bicentenary of the death of Napoleon, the warrior-emperor who famously bequeathed France its civil code, among other major reforms, but whose legacy remains tarnished in the eyes of many.

Macron said Napoleon Bonaparte's reinstatement of slavery was a "betrayal of the spirit of the Enlightenment." But in his speech under the dome of the Institute of France, he said that "Napoleon is part of us" and France "must look our history straight in the eyes." With such distinctions, Macron refused to cede to those who would refuse any honor to Napoleon, who is among the most important figures of French history and adored by some members of the right. The timing works for Macron, who is expected to try to renew his presidential mandate in elections next year. Macron later laid a wreath at the foot of Napoleon's grandiose tomb at Les Invalides, a gold-domed monument



French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron stand by the tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte during a ceremony to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Napoleon Bonaparte's death, at the Invalides monument in Paris, Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

Associated Press

and site of a military hospital. He was greeted by Prince Jean-Christophe Napoleon, pretender to the long-abolished throne of the emperor. The president's speech was meant to commemorate not celebrate the larger-than-life figure who died in exile on the remote volcanic island of St. Helena exactly 200 years ago, on May 5, 1821. Napoleon gave France its

civil code and penal code, established the system of prefects, representatives of the state in each French territory, and lycees, or high schools, among other things. But even the Institut of France refers to Napoleon "a major figure of history since always contested." "From the empire, we have renounced the worst and from the emperor we have embellished the

best," Macron said. "Commemorating this bicentenary, it's saying just that, simply, serenely," without "judging the past with laws of the present." For Macron, commemorating Napoleon was following through with his optics of facing the past and moving forward with lessons learned and offering "neither denial nor repentance."

Macron voiced his opposition last year to bringing down statues of figures linked to slavery in former French colonies, on the grounds that history can't be erased and the past must be acknowledged. Napoleon, a celebrated military genius, became an integral part of France's legacy. But in today's era, his image is tarnished by a decision to reestablish slavery in French colonies in 1802, after it was abolished in 1784. He was also responsible for years of carnage and destruction in wars fought across much of the European continent and as far away as Egypt. Ruler from 1799, he became emperor in 1804 for a decade, then again for three months in 1815. He was exiled to the Mediterranean island of Elba, escaped and miraculously raised a new army, only to meet defeat on June 18, 2015, at the hands of a British-led military coalition in the crucial battle of Waterloo. He was sent in 1815 to the British outpost of St. Helena, where he died after falling ill. Napoleon's body was later exhumed and entombed at Les Invalides in Paris. □

U.S. envoy in Egypt for talks on Ethiopia's dam dispute

By SAMY MAGDY

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — The U.S. envoy for the Horn of Africa on Wednesday met with the Egyptian president as

part of Washington's new push to find a resolution to a regional decade-long dispute over Ethiopia's massive dam on the Nile River's main tributary.



U.S. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Jeffrey Feltman, left, meets with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, third right, and their delegations, at the foreign ministry in Cairo, Egypt, Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

Associated Press

The U.S. envoy, Jeffrey Feltman, arrived in Cairo on Tuesday on the first leg of his tour of the region that includes stops in Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan amid growing concerns the dispute could escalate into a military conflict, threatening the entire Horn of Africa.

On Wednesday, Feltman met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi, who reiterated his warnings that Cairo will not tolerate any moves by Addis Ababa that could reduce Egypt's share of water from the Nile because of the Grand Ethiopia Renaissance Dam.

El-Sissi said Egypt would not accept anyone "harming its water interests" and described the issue of the

dam as "existential" to his country, urging the U.S. to play "an effective role" to settle the dispute. Feltman, who also met with Egypt's foreign and irrigation ministers, was quoted as saying that the Biden administration is "serious in settling such a sensitive issue."

The dispute now centers on how quickly Ethiopia fills and replenishes the reservoir and how much water it releases downstream in case of a multi-year drought. The latest round of African Union-brokered negotiations in April failed to make progress.

Egypt and Sudan argue that Ethiopia's plan to add 13.5 billion cubic meters of water in 2021 to the dam's reservoir on the Blue Nile is a threat to them. Cairo and Khartoum have called for the U.S., the U.N., and European Union to facilitate reaching a legally binding deal on the dam's the filling and operating. Ethiopia rejected the call. In March, el-Sissi warned of regional "instability that no one can imagine" without a legally binding agreement on operating the dam, based on international law and norms governing cross-border rivers. Egypt, which relies on the Nile for more than 90% of its water supplies, fears a devastating impact if the dam is operated without taking its needs into account. Ethiopia says the \$5 billion dam is essential, arguing the vast majority of its population lacks electricity. □

In Ethiopia camp, displaced Tigrayans live with hunger, fear

Associated Press

MEKELE, Ethiopia (AP) —

The memories are so painful that Birhanu Haile sometimes forgets to eat.

He is one of thousands of ethnic Tigrayans clinging to a marginal existence after fleeing their homes amid a conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region that has left countless dead.

Birhanu lost his land. His house in western Tigray has been occupied by ethnic Amhara who now claim the area as their own. His wife and two children are now refugees in Sudan. Two nephews were killed.

Now he is the coordinator of this camp of some 7,000 people that has overflowed a secondary school in the Tigray capital, Mekele. Life is grim even here. Weary families line up for pieces of flatbread and gravy, a meal that will be their lunch and dinner, then return to filthy classrooms where they sleep. Many came with almost nothing. And yet, "I don't want to think of going back," said 21-year-old Wegahta Weldie, a student from Mai Kadra, the scene



An organizer raises his hands to ask displaced Tigrayans to queue in an orderly way as they wait to receive food at the Hadnet General Secondary School which has become a makeshift home to thousands displaced by the conflict, in Mekele, in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

of the six-month-old conflict's first known massacre. She recalled stepping on dead bodies there as her family hid in a maize field and then walked hundreds of kilometers (miles) to reach Mekele.

"Many people had been killed and it was very dark,"

she said. "I could not tell whether they were my relatives or not."

No one knows just how many hundreds of thousands of Tigrayans have fled their homes during the war as Ethiopian troops and allied forces, including soldiers from neighbor-

ing Eritrea, pursue fighters loyal to the Tigray regional party whose leaders long dominated the national government before being sidelined by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

The fighting remains intense in some areas, complicating efforts to help the

displaced people or even reach many rural communities where some fear the real toll of the fighting is yet to be known.

Food for the camp is in short supply. The community relies heavily on donations from aid workers and well-wishers in Mekele who give everything from flour to the rare gift of a slaughtered cow.

For months, the international community has worried about the fate of Tigray's estimated 6 million people. Now, the United Nations and others warn, hunger is the next crisis. The planting season looms, and farmers have reported being intimidated from preparing their land. Others, desperate, have eaten their seeds.

"Ethiopia has only one planting season.

So if they are unable to access their land because of the ongoing fighting and plant the crops, we can expect extreme food shortage in the months to come," said Alyona Synenko, a spokeswoman with the International Committee for the Red Cross. □

Associated Press

U.N. alarmed over police violence in Colombia protests

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)

— The United Nations human rights office said it was "deeply alarmed" over violence against protesters in the Colombian city of Cali, where "police opened fire on demonstrators" and allegedly killed and injured several

people Monday night.

The statement from the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights comes as antigovernment protests sparked by proposed tax increase enter their sixth day and show few signs of stopping. According to Colombia's Human

Rights Ombudsman, 16 protesters and one policeman have been killed in the demonstrations since last Wednesday. But that figure doesn't include reports of deaths in Cali on Monday, which the U.N. said it is still trying to confirm.

The protests began after Colombia's government proposed a tax plan aimed at raising \$6.7 billion to pay the country's debts and maintain a basic income scheme for 3 million low-income people that started during the pandemic. President Iván Duque withdrew the tax plan on Sunday amid the protests and his finance minister resigned the following day, but large demonstrations and roadblocks have continued. □



A police officer winds up to throw a tear gas canister at protesters during a national strike against tax reform in Cali, Colombia, Monday, May 3, 2021.

Associated Press

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salad or choose for some mixed greens with lemon vinaigrette. Do not skip the carving station inviting you to try beef tenderloin in red wine demi-glace and the renowned mini popover. Continue your cravings with some seafood chowder before you dive into main courses like grilled salmon, grilled chicken Caribbean jerk, crispy pork belly with Caribbean rice. Do you enjoy fresh Italian dishes? Indulge in mushroom ravioli in truffle cream sauce, ossobuco ravioli or gnocchi with Pomodoro sauce. For the kids we have some special tender chicken with fries or mac & cheese. Kiss a sweet goodbye to this heavenly journey with some sweets including Aruban quesillo, strawberry opera and chocolate mousse.

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Aruba Today invites you to portrait that special mother figure in your life this **Mother's day**

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Email us at news@arubatoday.com before noon Friday May 7th, 2021

Medlab Aruba 'fit-2-fly': Covid-19 testing on the island



NOORD — While on vacation, the last thing you need to worry about is what to do or where to go for your COVID-19 testing. Many countries, including the U.S. require for all passengers heading back home to present with a negative test result for PCR or Antigen 72 hours prior to departure.

MEDLAB Aruba is an accredited ISO 15189:2012 OGA-LE 23-08 laboratory with over 30 years of experience on the island. The

laboratory complies with the Department of Public Health of Aruba, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) requirements for COVID-19 testing. MEDLAB Aruba has been assigned as one of the private laboratories authorized to perform "Fit-2-Fly" testing for departing passengers.

Hassle free scheduling – QR-code

The laboratory has invested on the only fully integrated



digital booking platform on the island that allows guests to pre-register for the testing prior to coming to Aruba and have all their information incorporated upon entry to any of the available testing centers. Guests will receive a confirmation email with QR-code that will be requested upon day of testing to facilitate a faster turn-around time for your results.

Testing options

Offering three method of testing gives you, our island visitors, the possibility to choose which service is at your convenience. Recommended time to complete test prior to departure is 48 (72) hours. We also request for you to bring your passport to the appointment. Testing Option 1: Walk-In service at our location in Noord Medical Center (NMC), Noord 63 or at Superfood COVID Testing Center. You may also book online at WWW.COVIDA-

RUBA.COM and choose location.

Testing Option 2: On-site at participating hotels. Only guests staying on these properties will be allowed to conduct the test. Appointment is also made online at WWW.COVIDA-RUBA.COM.

The participating hotels with testing facilities are Aruba Marriott Resort (Stellaris, Ocean and Surf Club), Holiday Inn, Playa Linda Beach Resort, RIU Antillas, RIU Palace, Eagle Resort, Costa Linda Beach Resort, Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort, Manchebo Beach Resort, Casa del Mar & Aruba Beach Club, Caribbean Palm Village.

Testing Option 3: Airbnb/ Other hotel location. We come to you for the test together with our vehicular Mobile Health Test Unit. We require a minimum of six people for this service. Request/ Book appointment

through WhatsApp number +297 5975548.

Price

Offering a great rate for the testing. The Antigen test is at \$50 and the PCR at \$100. Payment method is card (preferred), cash (hygiene measures).

The COVID Test is not covered by the Aruba Visitor's Insurance, but you are able to seek reimbursement once back home.

Results

Turn-around time for results is within 24 hours. Result is sent electronically to your email (check spam/ junk folder)

For more information visit www.covidaruba.com, call us at +297 5975548 or email us at covid@lab.aw. □



The Aruba Tourism Authority honor loyal visitors on the island

PALM BEACH — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The symbolic honorary Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were the couple Mr. Jim and Mrs. Cathie Gancio, whom have been visiting Aruba for over 25 years consecutively.

The lovely couple Gancio

stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, delicious variety of foods, its safety and Aruba's warm and friendly people who have become like family to them.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Playa Linda Beach Resort presented the certificate to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □



Healthy Pregnancy

By: Carlos M Viana,

Board Certified Clinical Nutritionist

ORANJESTAD — In the best of all worlds the preparation for the birth of your child would start many years in advance in detoxifying your body from toxic heavy metals, and fat-soluble toxins from insecticides, pesticides and the countless petroleum-based chemicals. In our clinic we have more than three thousand hair tests that show the body burden of toxic heavy metals that have crossed the placenta into the growing baby. If you plan to have children some day, here's important information for a healthier baby. Avoid alcohol and other drugs, including pharmaceuticals except under medical care.

Cigarette smoking and secondhand smoke during pregnancy cause a higher risk of having babies of lower birth weight. This can cause a host of health problems for the baby, such as cerebral palsy or learning disabilities. Women who actively smoke during pregnancy expose their developing baby to passive smoke; the chemicals pass through the placenta and put the baby at risk of lower birth weight.

An infant who was exposed to secondhand smoke as a developing fetus may be at increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Post-birth exposure to secondhand smoke from the mother, father or others in the household also increases the risk of SIDS. Secondhand smoke may cause asthma in children. In children who already have asthma, secondhand smoke can make episodes more frequent and more severe. Secondhand smoke is also tied to infections of the lower respiratory tract, such as bronchitis and pneumonia, especially in those younger than 6. It's also associated with irritation of the upper respiratory tract and a small reduction in lung function. Children living in households with smokers are more likely to develop ear infections.

Nutrition is an important part of a healthy pregnancy and baby. And the best way to insure you are getting the best for mom and baby is to take high quality, natural, food-based supplements. I recommend a pregnancy package that includes a gentle multi-nutrient, Lecithin, and safe, essential fatty acids. Each supplement provides distinct benefits.

Number one in my Pre-natal Pack is a natural multi-nutrient that is specifically formulated for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. Since we know that food today does not contain all the necessary life supporting nutrients, supplementation is recommended. A good Pre-natal multi-nutrient needs to contain Folic Acid to prevent birth defects of the baby's spine. Folic acid is a water-soluble vitamin belonging to the B-complex group of vitamins. Taken together with the other B vitamins, these help the body break down complex carbohydrates into simple sugars to be used for energy. If you were taking birth control pills prior to becoming pregnant, they can cause higher loss of B vitamins. Excess B vitamins are excreted from the body rather than stored for later use. Therefore, it's a good idea to take a quality B complex or multi-nutrient with all B vitamins daily. Always be sure to check with a clinical nutritionist for proper usage of any supplement if you are pregnant or nursing.

So many pregnant women become anemic during their pregnancy that doctors often prescribe iron supplements. Most maternal supplements may contain 30 mg or more of iron per dose, in combination with vitamins or other minerals. While it is true that iron is a basic requirement for the survival and growth of cells of all types, including bacteria, parasites, and cancer, as a certified clinical nutritionist, supplementing with synthetic iron concerns me. A natural food-based source of iron is much more absorbable, will not upset the stomach of new mothers and will not cause constipation. Foods containing natural iron are spinach and other dark leafy greens.

Benefiting both mother and baby, Lecithin is a great addition to the pregnancy package. Lecithin helps a growing baby's brain get all the nutrients and support. We have verified, babies whose mother's supplemented with lecithin are born with bigger brains and do better in school. Meanwhile, lecithin taken by breastfeeding mothers helps convert their baby fat into healthy breast milk.

The third supplement in a pregnancy package should include the essential fatty acids. Omega oils/acids are essential for everyone's health. They include fats Omega 9, Omega



6 and Omega 3. These indispensable fats are necessary to build healthy bodies and provide energy. The secret is to take three in relation to each other. For one part meat or butter, you want to eat two parts vegetable oils and nuts, and include three parts fish in your diet. If you are allergic to fish oils, Flaxseed oil is a vegetarian option. An omega 6 that can convert to an omega 3 as needed. Poor quality fish oils are not recommended as they may contain toxic metals. Be sure to always use a high-quality oil and keep away from light and heat. Ideally, a dietary supplement that provides all three in the specific ratio is ideal.

It is not advisable to have dental work done while pregnant. Even a simple procedure like the annual teeth hygiene cleaning has been shown to release mercury from amalgam (silver) fillings. If there is a tooth problem, make sure you consult a Biocompatible (natural) dentist to avoid toxic materials when possible.

There are several acupuncture points that are contraindicated, called "forbidden points" during pregnancy that every trained acupuncturist knows well. Yet, many problems encountered during pregnancy including "morning sickness", especially that lasts all day, overly active babies, low back pain, high blood pressure during pregnancy all show positive effects with acupuncture treatments done by a qualified, experienced professional. Other safe, natural solutions are available for an unexpected cold, flu, stress, or mild allergy attack.

Get The Point! A healthy pregnancy has a much better chance of producing healthy children. If we invest as much time in preparing and maintaining our health as we spend getting the house ready for the newborn, we will have healthier children. With a little guidance your pregnancy can be a naturally joyous event. □

CARLOS VIANA, Ph. D. is an Oriental Medical Doctor (O.M.D.) having studied in China; a US Board Cert. Clinical Nutritionist (C.C.N.), an Addiction Professional (C.Ad.), Chairperson of the Latin American Committee of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT), a Rejuvenating Cell Therapist specializing in Age Management, has a weekly radio program, writes and lectures extensively. For information: VIANA HEALING CENTER, Kibaima 7, St Cruz TEL: 585-1270



Treasury warns of need to deal with national debt limit

By **MARTIN CRUTSINGER**

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Treasury Department says it will employ measures to avoid an unprecedented default on the national debt this summer, but officials say those measures could be exhausted “much more quickly” than normal given the unusual circumstances of the global pandemic. Treasury officials on Wednesday urged Congress to pass either a new borrowing limit or another suspension of the debt before a July 31 deadline. The Treasury will continue to initiate the types of book-keeping maneuvers it has used in the past to keep the government from breaching a level that would trigger a default on the massive national debt.

“In light of the substantial COVID-related uncertainty about receipts and outlays in the coming month, it is very difficult to predict how long extraordinary measures might last,” Brian Smith, Treasury’s deputy as-



This June 6, 2019, file photo shows the U.S. Treasury Department building at dusk in Washington. Associated Press

sistant secretary for federal finance said in a prepared statement.

The government has been able to borrow enormous sums of money to finance trillions of dollars of support during the pandemic because the limit on borrowing has been suspended.

But after July 31, the limit will return to whatever debt level exists at that time.

The national debt subject to the limit now stands at a record \$28.1 trillion. That amount covers debt the government owes to itself in the form of commitments to Social Security and other

government trust funds. The amount of the debt that is held by the public currently totals \$22.1 trillion, an amount slightly higher than 100% of the entire economy and heights not seen since the huge borrowing the government did in the 1940s to finance World War

II. Borrowing has soared in recent years to finance huge budget deficits that reflected increased spending on domestic and military programs in budget deals then-President Donald Trump reached with Congress and also to cover the costs of Trump’s \$1.5 trillion tax cut approved by Congress in December 2017.

Over the past year, the higher deficits have reflected the trillions of dollars the government has spent to provide support during the pandemic-triggered recession. In the latest package, President Joe Biden got Congress to approve \$1.9 trillion in March to provide \$1,400 payments to individuals and other types of support for individuals and small businesses.

Treasury officials did not specify what measures it will employ if Congress has not acted by the July 31 deadline to either raise the borrowing limit or simply suspend the limit for a period of time. □

Peloton recalls treadmills, halts sales, after a child dies

By **JOSEPH PISANI**

AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Peloton is recalling about 125,000 of its treadmills, less than a month after denying they were dangerous and saying it would not pull them from the market, even though they were linked to the death of a child and injuries of 29 others.

The company said Wednesday that it will now offer full refunds for the Peloton Tread+ treadmills, which cost more than \$4,200. It will also stop selling them.

The recall comes after the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission warned on April 17 that people with children and pets should immediately stop using the Tread+ treadmill after a child was pulled under it and died.

At the time, Peloton pushed back against the safety commission saying the warning was “inaccu-

rate and misleading” and that there was no reason to stop using the machines. CEO John Foley also said he had “no intention” of recalling the treadmills.

In a statement Wednesday, Foley apologized and said the company “made a mistake” in its initial response to the safety commission.

Shares of New York-based Peloton Interactive Inc. sunk nearly 14% to \$83.39

after the recall was announced Wednesday, its second biggest percentage decline.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, a Democrat from Connecticut who is chair of the consumer safety committee, said the recall was dangerously delayed.

“Peloton unacceptably put consumers at risk,” Blumenthal said in a statement, adding that he would work to strengthen

the safety commission so that “companies like Peloton no longer get to call the shots on consumer safety.” Under current laws, the Consumer Product Safety Commission has to negotiate with companies in order to release warnings about a product’s hazards.

Peloton is best known for its stationary bikes, but it introduced treadmills about three years ago. Sales of Peloton equipment have soared during the pandemic as virus-weary people avoid gyms and workout at home. In the last three months of 2020, the company brought in \$1 billion in revenue, more than double what it made the year before.

In all, Peloton said it received 72 reports of adults, kids, pets or other items, such as exercise balls, being pulled under the rear of the treadmill. Of those reports, 29 were of children

who suffered injuries, including broken bones and cuts. One child, who was 6 years old, died.

Joseph Martyak, a spokesman at the Consumer Product Safety Commission, said the agency is still testing the treadmills, but it appears the design of the Peloton Tread+, including its belt and its height off the floor, could make it more likely to pull people, pets and items under the machine than other brands of treadmills. Those who own the Tread+ treadmill have until Nov. 6, 2022, to get a full refund from Peloton. The safety commission still recommends that people stop using the treadmill, but for those that want to keep it, Peloton said it will move it free of charge to a room where children or pets cannot access it and update the software so a passcode is required to unlock it. □



This Nov. 19, 2019, file photo shows a Peloton logo on the company’s stationary bicycle in San Francisco.

Associated Press

60 years since 1st American in space: Tourists lining up

By **MARCIA DUNN**

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

(AP) — Sixty years after Alan Shepard became the first American in space, everyday people are on the verge of following in his cosmic footsteps.

Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin used Wednesday's anniversary to kick off an auction for a seat on the company's first crew spaceflight a short Shepard-like hop launched by a rocket named New Shepard. The Texas liftoff is targeted for July 20, the date of the Apollo 11 moon landing.

Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic aims to kick off tourist flights next year, just as soon as he straps into his space-skimming, plane-launched rocketship for a test run from the New Mexico base.

And Elon Musk's SpaceX will launch a billionaire and his sweepstakes winners in September. That will be followed by a flight by three businessmen to the International Space Station in January.

"We've always enjoyed this incredible thing called space, but we always want more people to be able to experience it as well," NASA astronaut Shane Kimbrough said from the space station Wednesday. "So I think this is a great step in the right direction."

It's all rooted in Shepard's



In this May 5, 1961 file photo, astronaut Alan Shepard sits in his capsule at Cape Canaveral, Fla., aboard a Mercury-Redstone rocket. Freedom 7 was the first American manned suborbital space flight, making Shepard the first American in space.

Associated Press

15-minute flight on May 5, 1961.

Shepard was actually the second person in space the Soviet Union launched cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin three weeks earlier, to Shepard's everlasting dismay.

The 37-year-old Mercury astronaut and Navy test pilot cut a slick sci-fi figure in his silver spacesuit as he stood

in the predawn darkness at Cape Canaveral, looking up at his Redstone rocket. Impatient with all the delays, including another hold in the countdown just minutes before launch, he famously growled into his mic: "Why don't you fix your little problem and light this candle?"

His capsule, Freedom 7, soared to an altitude of 116 miles (186 kilometers) before parachuting into the Atlantic.

Twenty days later, President John F. Kennedy committed to landing a man on the moon and returning him safely by decade's end, a promise made good in July 1969 by Apollo 11's Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. Shepard, who died in 1998, went on to command Apollo 14 in 1971, becoming the fifth moonwalker and lone lunar golfer.

Since Gagarin and Shepard's pioneering flights, 579 people have rocketed into space or reached its fringes, according to NASA. Nearly two-thirds are American and just over 20% Soviet or Russian. About 90% are male and most are

white, although NASA's crews have been more diverse in recent decades.

A Black community college educator from Tempe, Arizona, sees her spot on SpaceX's upcoming private flight as a symbol. Sian Proctor uses the acronym J.E.D.I. for "a just, equitable, diverse and inclusive space."

NASA wasn't always on board with space tourism, but is today.

"Our goal is one day that everyone's a space person," NASA's human spaceflight chief, Kathy Lueders said following Sunday's splash-down of a SpaceX capsule with four astronauts. "We're very excited to see it starting to take off."

Twenty years ago, NASA clashed with Russian space officials over the flight of the world's first space tourist.

California businessman Dennis Tito paid \$20 million to visit the space station, launching atop a Russian rocket. Virginia-based Space Adventures arranged Tito's weeklong trip, which ended May 6, 2001, as well as seven more tourist flights that followed.

"By opening up his checkbook, he kicked off an industry 20 yrs ago," Space Adventures co-founder Eric Anderson tweeted last week. "Space is opening up more than it ever has, and for all." There's already a line. A Russian actress and movie director are supposed to launch from Kazakhstan in the fall. They'll be followed in December by Space Adventures' two newest clients, also launching on a Russian Soyuz rocket. SpaceX will be next up in January with the three businessmen; the flight from Florida's Kennedy Space Center was arranged by Axiom Space, a Houston company run by former NASA employees. And as early as 2023, SpaceX is supposed to take a Japanese entrepreneur and his guests around the moon and back.

While no fan of human spaceflight he prefers robotic explorers Duke University emeritus his-

tory professor Alex Roland acknowledges the emergence of spaceflight companies might be "the most significant change in the last 60 years." Yet he wonders whether there will be much interest once the novelty wears off and the inevitable fatalities occur. Then there's the high price of admission.

The U.S., Canadian and Israeli entrepreneurs flying SpaceX early next year are paying \$55 million each for their 1 1/2-week mission. Virgin Galactic's tickets cost considerably less for minutes versus days of weightlessness. Initially \$250,000, the price is expected to go up once Branson's company starts accepting reservations again.

Blue Origin declined Wednesday to give a ticket price for future sales and would not comment on who else besides the auction winner will be on board the capsule in July. A couple more crew flights, each lasting minutes, would follow by year's end. As for SpaceX's private flight on a fully automated Dragon capsule, tech entrepreneur Jared Isaacman won't say what he's paying. He considers his three-day flight a "great responsibility" and is taking no shortcuts in training; he took his crewmates hiking up Mount Rainier last week-end to toughen them up.

"If something does go wrong, it will set back every other person's ambition to go and become a commercial astronaut," Isaacman said recently.

John Logsdon, professor emeritus at George Washington University, where he founded the Space Policy Institute, has mixed feelings about this shift from space exploration to adventure tourism.

"It takes the romance and excitement out of going to space," Logsdon said in an email this week. Instead of the dawn of a new era like so many have proclaimed, it's "more like the end of the era when space flight was special. I guess that is progress." □

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

		8		7	4			
				1	3			
7						5		8
				5			9	1
3								7
2	4			9				
1		5						4
				1	2			
				4	8		2	

Difficulty Level ★★★

5/06

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U.S. birth rate falls to lowest point in more than a century

By **MIKE STOBBE**
AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. birth rate fell 4% last year, the largest single-year decrease in nearly 50 years, according to a government report being released Wednesday.

The rate dropped for moms of every major race and ethnicity, and in nearly every age group, falling to

the lowest point since federal health officials started tracking it more than a century ago.

Births have been declining in younger women for years, as many postponed motherhood and had smaller families.

Birth rates for women in their late 30s and in their 40s have been inching up. But not last year. □



In this Monday, April 6, 2020 file photo, cots and cribs are arranged at the Mountain America Expo Center in Sandy, Utah, as an alternate care site or for hospital overflow amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Associated Press

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Getting up Close with Glenn and Ted Nash, new duo in jazz

By MESFIN FEKADU

AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Glenn Close recently made music-related headlines for her playful performance of “Da Butt” at the Academy Awards, but the revered actor has some real music news: she’s releasing an album with Grammy-winning jazz saxophonist-composer Ted Nash on Friday.

“I learned about Go-go (music) and certainly about the Washington (D.C.) music scene from those years; I was able to do that little piece of ‘Da Butt’ because I had looked at Spike’s music video. Around the Oscars and afterward, I was doing this wonderful character for Gore Verbinski and his animated featured — it’s not going to come out for a couple of years — but ... it was all funk (music). And now I’m back to jazz. So, yeah, mix it up! It’s really fun and interesting.”

The Emmy and Tony winner is used to her movies and TV shows premiering but having an album release is a first: “I’m very, very excited for it to be out in the world, especially now.” Close worked with Nash on his previous albums, but the two are co-stars on “Transformation: Personal Stories of Change, Acceptance, and Evolution,” an 11-track spoken word jazz album that tackles heavy topics like race, politics, identity and more. Nash, a member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, was tasked with composing music to match the words — both newly written lyrics along with hand-picked selections by Glenn from poets Ted Hughes and Conrad Aiken, biologist E.O. Wilson and playwright Tony Kushner.

Close, who offers her voice on three songs, called friends to help round out the album, including esteemed jazz musician and Jazz at Lincoln Center Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis, along with the epic players in the JLCO. Oscar-nominated actor Amy Irving reads “One Among Many,” written by former radical Judith Clark at

the request of Close and Emmy-winning entertainer Wayne Brady guest stars on three tracks and even

Ted didn’t know whether he could get through it, actually. But when you put your soul

the human condition, dissonance, harmony — all of these different instruments playing off each other. In

ally well, I think that would be fun.”

Linking up with Nash allowed Close to fulfill another dream: release a full-length album about the real world. And Nash has big hopes for their collaborative project — he wants it to spark change around the globe.

“You can take away whatever it is you want from this project, whether it’s just you enjoy Wayne Brady and how he talks or whether you think that what he’s saying is deep enough to move you to some kind of action, or somewhere in between. My goal is to move people to some kind of thoughtful action, but it’s maybe a lofty goal.”

Another goal: winning a Grammy, especially since it brings Close closer to EGOT status.

“Accolades should never be the reason for doing anything ... but I do think for Glenn — this is just a personal thing — I would love to see her get a Grammy Award because then she’s got three out of the four EGOTs,” Nash said.

Close is no stranger to the Grammys. She’s been nominated three times in the ‘80s, though she admits: “I forgot, actually, that I had been nominated for a Grammy.”

At one point she even competed with John Lennon, Yoko Ono and Jesse Jackson. Who won over her? Jack Nicholson, Ben Kingsley and Robin Williams, who died in 2014.

“Awww,” she said, putting her hand on her heart. “I’m very proud to lose to Robin Williams.”

“Well, gosh, I’d be thrilled if this got a (Grammy), even to be nominated would be incredible,” she added. □



Glenn Close, nominated for an Oscar for best actress for her role in “The Wife,” poses at the 91st Academy Awards Nominees Luncheon in Beverly Hills, Calif., on Feb. 4, 2019, left, and musician Ted Nash poses for a portrait in New York on May 4, 2021.

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wrote an original called “A Piece by the Angriest Black Man in America (or, How I Learned to Forgive Myself for Being a Black Man in America).”

“I feel like every time there’s a new project, it’s an opportunity to grow as an artist and embrace new ideas. I think that’s something that as I get older, I realize is more important to me. It’s not just, ‘Oh, I want to write some hip (expletive),’” Nash said.

The musician added that his job was to help the album’s speakers deliver with authenticity and “be absolutely supportive of somebody who’s spilling their guts and support that in a way that helps it emotionally and gives them a safe space to do that.”

Nash plays several roles on the album, from composer to instrumentalist to producer and conductor. But he also became a subject: His son Eli speaks about his experience coming out to him as a transgender man on “Dear Dad/Letter.” His father responds — through instrumental music — on “Dear Dad/Response.”

“It was very moving, and

into your instrument, into your music, I think it was a very healing experience for him,” Close said. “A very transformative experience.”

“When (my son) started reading the piece, I didn’t expect to kind of feel the things that I felt,” Nash explained.

“All of a sudden it hits me that everyone else is hearing this. They’re hearing this personal piece that was a letter to me, and I’m playing (music) along with it. And I got very full. But, if anything, that just helped me to have a more profound opportunity of expression.”

Close, Nash, the orchestra and the special guests recorded the album at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City early last year before the coronavirus pandemic hit.

Close said before making the album, jazz somewhat intimidated her.

“I thought you had to kind of know what you were hearing. But now I’m just inspired by it because I think it’s deeply American and it’s also deeply human,” she said. “It is an expression of

a good world, everybody gets a turn to stand up and play their bit.”

Though Close, 74, is more known for film roles and eight Oscar nominations, as well as three Emmys for TV performances, she’s always had ties to music.

One of her three Tony Awards was for the musical “Sunset Boulevard” and she also earned a nomination for her performance in “Barnum.” She even scored a best original song nod at the Golden Globes for co-writing “Lay Your Head Down” from “Albert Nobbs,” a 2011 film Close produced, co-wrote and starred in.

When asked if she’s ever picked up an instrument, she replied with a laugh: “I pick ‘em up. I don’t necessarily play them.”

“My great dream is to learn how to play the electric bass. I want to sit in the background with a cool hat on. I actually have a really cool Gibson electric bass and I started lessons here. But then I go off and work and everything falls apart and I forget stuff,” she said. “But if I can learn like six songs and do them re-

9	3	8	5	7	4	1	6	2
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2	4	1	7	9	8	3	5	6
1	2	5	9	3	7	6	8	4
4	8	3	1	2	6	9	7	5
6	9	7	4	8	5	2	1	3

Baseball's sweetest song: Willie Mays, forever young, is 90

By FRED LIEF
AP Sports Writer

Willie Mays is turning 90, and no mistaking that number. It strikes with the clarity of a line drive. Mays played in a sport measured by milestones — 3,000 hits, 500 homers, signposts he passed and then some — and now here's one more. On Thursday, when baseball's oldest living Hall of Famer is serenaded with renditions of "Happy Birthday to You," it might be time to expand the playlist. A player of such infinite variety deserves as much. There's plenty to choose from. References to the Giants center fielder cut across the years and the genres — rock, pop, folk, country, rap, hip hop. The two most frequent mentions come in what have become ballpark anthems: John Fogerty's "Centerfield" and Terry Cashman's "Talkin' Baseball (Willie, Mickey & The Duke)."

Fogerty grew up in San Francisco, his father a Joe DiMaggio fan. His song, released in 1985, is one of hope on a day when all seems possible: "We're born again, there's new grass on the field/A-roundin' third, I'm headed for home/It's a brown-eyed handsome man." The "brown-eyed handsome man" streaking to the plate is a tribute to the 1956 song of the same name by Chuck Berry but may well be the Say Hey Kid himself. Fogerty goes on to sing of a player riding the bench and dying to get into the game. He summons a pantheon of outfielders: "So say, 'Hey Willie, tell Ty Cobb and Joe DiMaggio/Don't say it ain't so you know the time is now.'" Finally, there is the plea and the heart of the song: "So put me in coach, I'm ready to play today/Look at me, I can be centerfield." Mays, no doubt, would understand. "Talkin' Baseball" came out during the major league strike of 1981. It's anchored around talk — fierce arguments across boroughs and barstools — about whether Mays, Mantle or Snider was the better center fielder in

New York during the 1950s. Cashman's vote is clear: "And me, I always loved Willie Mays/Those were the days!" Mays also gets top billing in the title and when the names of the trio are sung in the refrain. And the song ends this way: "... (Say hey, say hey, say hey)." Even Snider wasn't about to argue. In 1979, Mays was only player elected to the Hall of Fame by the baseball writers, with Snider finishing second. Snider said at the time, "Willie more or less really deserves to be in by himself." The Duke joined Mays in Cooperstown the next year. Just about everyone saw something in Mays. Maybe it was the dash around the bases, his cap flying. Or the slashing hits to all fields. Or those stickball games with

kids in Harlem not far from the old Polo Grounds. Or the gentle tap of his glove before a basket catch and his run back to the infield after an inning, carrying the ball as if it were a wounded bird. Or maybe the sheer joyful lyricism of the name "Willie Mays." Those running the playlist on Mays' birthday have options apart from Fogerty and Cashman. Certainly, Chuck Prophet's "Willie Mays is Up at Bat" deserves a listen. The song is from the 2012 "Temple Beautiful" album honoring San Francisco, the city Prophet calls home. It begins as a kind of hymn: "I hear the church bells ring, Willie Mays is up at bat/I hear the crowd go wild, all he did was touch his hat." So many ways to brush



Baseball legend Willie Mays smiles prior to a game between the New York Mets and the San Francisco Giants in San Francisco, in this Friday, Aug. 19, 2016, file photo. On Thursday, May 6, 2021, Mays turns 90.

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back that assertion. But Game 7 of the 1962 World Series will do. Giants at bat and trailing the Yankees 1-0 in the ninth. Matty Alou is on first with two out. Mays, hardly swinging for the fence, laces a double

into the right field corner. Alou, wary of Roger Maris' arm in right, screeches to a stop at third. That sets up a wrenching finish for the Giants when Willie McCovey lines out to second baseman Bobby Richardson. □

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